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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay:
draft resolution

Security of humanitarian personnel

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations,

Deeply concerned by the proliferation in the last few years of conflicts and other emergencies which have dramatically increased the loss of human lives, suffering of victims, flows of refugees and other displaced persons, as well as material destruction,

Conscious of the need for the international community to assist and protect the affected civilian population, including refugees and other displaced persons, in situations of conflict and other emergencies,

Conscious also of the great importance of humanitarian and other recovery assistance in post-conflict situations, the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees and other displaced persons, the return to civilian life of former combatants and the re-establishment of respect for human rights,

Recalling in this context the statement by the President of the Security Council of 19 June 1997[1] on protection for humanitarian assistance to refugees and others in conflict situations,

Noting the important role that a permanent international criminal court could play in bringing to justice those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law, and welcoming in this regard the decision by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/207 of 17 December 1996 to hold a diplomatic conference in 1998 with a view to finalizing and adopting a convention on the establishment of a permanent international criminal court,

Aware that most humanitarian operations are implemented through close cooperation among personnel of United Nations agencies, other international organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations,

Commending the courage of those who take part in humanitarian operations, often at great personal risk,

Deploring the rising toll of casualties among humanitarian personnel in conflicts and in post-conflict situations, as well as the physical violence and harassment to which those participating in humanitarian operations are too frequently exposed,

1. Strongly stresses the urgent need to ensure respect for and promote the principles and norms of international humanitarian law, including those related to the security of humanitarian personnel, both international and local;

2. Strongly condemns any act or failure to act which obstructs or prevents humanitarian personnel from discharging their humanitarian functions, or which entails their being subjected to threats, the use of force or physical attack frequently resulting in injury or death;

3. Calls upon all Governments and parties in situations of conflict or other emergencies, including post-conflict situations, to cooperate fully with humanitarian agencies and organizations and guarantee the unimpeded and safe access of humanitarian personnel in order to allow them to efficiently perform their task of assisting the affected civilian population, including refugees and other displaced persons;

4. Demands that all Governments and parties take all possible measures to ensure that the lives and well-being of humanitarian personnel are respected and protected;

5. Urges all States to ensure that any threat or act of violence committed against humanitarian personnel on their territory is properly investigated and to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted;

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[1] S/PRST/1997/34.

6. Welcomes the opportunity to discuss the respect for and security of humanitarian personnel at the First Periodical Meeting on International Humanitarian Law, to be held at Geneva in January 1998, and invites all States parties to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 to take an active part in that meeting;

7. Calls upon all States to become parties to the relevant international instruments, in particular to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel of 9 December 1994,[2] and to respect their provisions fully;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to present a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the security situation of all humanitarian personnel and measures to be taken to improve it, taking into account the views of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, other relevant humanitarian actors as well as the United Nations Security Coordinator.

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[2] General Assembly resolution 49/59, annex.